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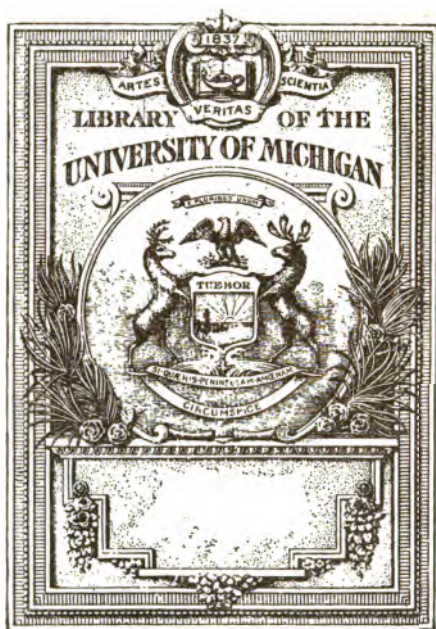
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1824

# ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE ASSOCIATION

OF THE

## ALUMNI

OF

## MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE.

ON THE EVENING OF

## COMMENCEMENT,

AUGUST 18, 1824.

BY R. C. MALLARY.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE  
ASSOCIATION.

RUTLAND:

PRINTED BY WM. FAY,

1824.

### ERRATA.

- Page 5, line 13 from bottom, instead of improvement, read improvements.
- " 5, line 8, 9, 10 from bottom, instead of Egypt had been her mistress, with the exception of a few feeble nations, of Grecian origin. Italy remained uncivilized, read Egypt had been her mistress. With the exception of a few feeble nations, of Grecian origin, Italy remained uncivilized.
- " 6, line 11 from top, instead of cultivation, read cultivators.
- " 8, line 11 from bottom, instead of meioration, read melioration.
- " 10, line 9, from top, instead of a comma after degraded should be a period.
- " 11, line 9 from bottom, instead of verberabet, read verberabit.
- " 16, line 13 from bottom, instead of follows, read follow.
- " 25, line 2 from bottom, instead of faculties, read facilities.
- " 26, line 11 from the bottom, instead of natural, read mutual.

## ADDRESS.

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MY FRIENDS—

To apologize for an effort, which might have been easily avoided, may appear like affected diffidence.— But, to repay the kindness of those, who have invited me to this station ; to afford any recompence for the attention of this enlightened assembly, I must in candid sincerity confess, is beyond my expectation. My hopes are limited to an escape from censure.

The cultivation of the mind, that portion of divinity, which resides in mortal bosoms, may have long lost its novelty, as a subject, yet it continues to rise before us, with augmenting importance. All feel the heavy pressure of the truth, that a soul, full of virtuous thought alone, can reach the summit of human happiness. If the man, who makes two blades of grass grow where one only did before, is entitled to our applause, how great should be the merit of him, who adds to the stock of intellectual treasure. To promote, to enlarge the means of intellectual improvement is the object of your present exertions. It is a cause as virtuous, as it is comprehensive, as truly great, as the mind is valuable. Philanthropy, benevolence and patriotism unite

in one mingled aspiration to heaven, that it may spread and flourish and triumph, until every mind is illuminated from the prince to the peasant, from the crowned heathen, who bathes in the Ganges, to the naked Ethiopian on the banks of the Niger.

To trace, with accuracy, the progress of literature from distant times, would require a deeper research, than becomes me to attempt. It is hoped, that your indulgence will allow a rapid reference to the condition of some of the nations, in other ages, the most distinguished for their civilization and science. It may render us more grateful for the blessings conferred on our own.

It is just, that we should feel profound veneration for the monuments of ancient genius. They have ceaseless claims on our respect and admiration. They appear the more conspicuous, as they arose amidst the surrounding wastes of barbarism, like dispersed stars among opening clouds. But rich, as may be the fountains of ancient learning; exalted as may be the wisdom of those, whose names appear so brilliant in classic annals, the age, in which we live, must stand pre-eminent in moral grandeur.

Egypt was once placed at the head of civilized nations. The most enlightened men of other countries resorted to the borders of the Nile, to complete their study of the arts and sciences. But whatever knowledge of the arts and sciences existed in that country, small was the number, to whom their treasures were unfolded. They were too sacred for vulgar minds, for a general diffusion. They were hidden from the great mass of mankind, by the gloomy cloud of hieroglyphical

obscurity. Lakes may have been excavated, magnificent cities erected, mountains transported to be raised again in obelisks and pyramids to please the whim of tyranny, yet, small must have been the portion of a countless population, which possessed that knowledge, which opens and improves the mind and prepares it for the most solid and rational enjoyment. Wretched must have been the moral and religious condition of a people, where insects, reptiles and beasts were adored as gods, were worshipped as superintending divinities. . . A reference to the history of Greece fills the mind with the noblest emotions. It is illuminated by the brightest rays of learning and genius. All admire the glorious achievements of her people in arts and arms. All feel the power of their eloquence, the glowing warmth of their muse. All respect the wisdom of her political institutions.

It is still evident, that in the most virtuous days of Greece, her principles of wisdom and philosophy, her forms of governments or improvement in science had but little influence upon neighboring nations. They had not reached the Danube, nor passed the Euphrates. Egypt had been her mistress, with the exception of a few feeble nations, of Grecian origin. Italy remained uncivilized.—It is true, the military power of Greece was extensively felt. The virtues of her people may have been known and the excellence of her governments understood by distant countries, yet they, in the days of their purity, contributed but little to the benefit of mankind, beyond her own dominions. Later ages have reaped the richest harvests.

Although Greece occupies so wide a space in history;

It is surprising, that she could have been confined to such narrow limits, on the map of the world. It is apparent that her population must have been as limited, as her territory, for at the great battle of Platea, which decided her fate, her armies were composed of less than thirty five thousand freemen. Yet, small as it was, a general diffusion of intelligence could not have existed in most of her states. The art of printing was unknown. That makes every human habitation a school, an academy, an university. Its benefits were not enjoyed by ancient society. The cultivation of the soil, those engaged in the laborious occupations of life, especially under the government of Sparta, were seldom allowed to engage in public affairs or participate in the blessings of education. The institutions of Lycurgus made a portion of the people haughty, insolent and tyrannical, the remainder humble, slavish and dependant. The condition of both was equally opposed to a liberal cultivation of the mind. There must have existed throughout the Grecian States, but a partial and imperfect system of intellectual improvement, far from that extended, generous plan, adopted by the free and enlightened countries of the present day.

Rome was founded in the face of surrounding enemies. Her people for centuries were more devoted to military glory, than to a cultivation of the arts of peace. The aggrandizement of their city, at the expense of Italy, was their earliest object ; their next to make the whole world contribute to its splendor.

At the time of the invasion of Italy by the Carthaginians, more than five hundred years from the foundation of Rome, her power extended over a contracted



territory. Her boundaries, until a short time before, held numerous independant nations, sometimes allies, often enemies and seldom inclined to adopt Roman principles or institutions. To many, it must have been indifferent whether Hannibal or Sempronius conquered. Surrounding nations, therefore, could have derived but little aid from Roman arts and civilization, at the time, when the Roman character was the most conspicuous for its moral greatness, at a time when history is adorned with the noble virtues, the splendid achievements of Regulus, Fabius, and Scipio. The dark lines of barbarian circumvallation encircled a narrow spot. The immense regions of the north still slumbered in their primitive darkness.

The grand design of defending Rome by assailing the ramparts of Carthage accorded with the mighty spirit of her people. The policy was as great, as the effects were awfully decisive. Rome was now safe. She began to taste the pleasures of wealth and glory acquired in foreign conquests. The petty states of Italy no longer dared to dispute her authority. She was left free to engage in those mighty schemes of ambition, which terminated in the almost entire subjugation of the world.

The only aim of Roman policy was now the power, the glory and magnificence of Rome. The means employed to obtain them were her legions. The improvement of the moral condition of barbarian nations, which felt the weight of her power and vengeance, formed but a feeble motive. The sword is seldom an useful pioneer to humanity, civilization and science.

The waste and desolation of Africa, the cruel mandate

for the annihilation of Carthage and its savage execution, are sad, yet just illustrations of the designs of that haughty republic. Did the plunder and destruction of Corinth by Mummius aid the cause of humanity and virtue? Did the rapacity of Consuls and praetors pave the way, for a wider diffusion of civilization among the provinces of conquered, ruined prostrate Greece?—What benefits did the cause of science gain by the arms of Sylla, Pompey or Titus in Asia? By the overthrow of Mithridates or the conflagration of Jerusalem!

What degrees of intellectual improvement marked the progress of Cæsar in Egypt? That country was subdued and plundered, but what redeeming alleviation did it receive from the hand of its conquerors?

Wretched indeed must have been the influence of Roman character upon the Egyptians, when displayed in the dissolute depravity of Anthony. His example at the court of the voluptuous Cleopatra, could not have excited an exalted veneration for the virtues of a nation, whose armies he commanded.

In the great division of Empire, by the first triumvirate, who can imagine, that the melioration of the condition of mankind ever entered into their views! Did Pompey assume the government of Spain, to heal their bleeding wounds, to diffuse among her people the blessings of peace and security? Did Crassus play the tyrant in the east, to redeem the millions, who bowed their necks to his yoke, from ignorance and superstition?—Did Cæsar display the Roman eagles in Gaul, Helvetium and Britain, for the purpose of teaching their wandering tribes the doctrines of religion and morality, or the value of enlightened freedom? When he returned

laden with the spoils of conquered nations, could he truly boast that he had left the scenes of his military glory improved by the arts, or illuminated by the science of his country? What institutions did he establish for the cultivation of the human mind? What means did he adopt to elevate barbarian intellect, from the dark valley of ignorance and superstition?

Rome was now rapidly descending from that height, to which her former virtues had raised her. Inflated with pride, corrupted with the wealth of desolated empires, she had but little concern for the prosperity and happiness of her vassal kingdoms. The declaration of Buto, the Dalmatian Chief, to the tribunal of Tiberius, was as true, as it was bold and manly. He asserted, that "the Romans had sent, instead of dogs and shepherds to secure their flocks, only bears and wolves to devour them." A government, administered by a Nero or Caligula, could claim but little respect, even from savages. To see their bravest and most heroic countrymen slaughtered in civilized sport, or dragged in melancholly procession along the streets of the conqueror's capital, to gratify the vanity and pride of an exulting multitude, must have excited eternal hatred to all, that was Roman.

If the laws, manners and customs of Rome were received by conquered nations, they were prescribed by resistless Cohorts, at the point of the javelin. If some of the inferior arts were introduced, it was for the purpose of enabling them to contribute more largely to the rapacity of their plunderers. If they enjoyed peace, it was the death-like peace of Slavery. If let-

ters and science were taught, it was to broken hearts and prostrate minds. If the dismal creed of the Druids was extirpated, it was to prepare the way, for the altars of Mars and Jupiter. If the sacrifice of human victims, by the priesthood of the wilderness, was prohibited, it was followed by permission to compel thousands to butcher each other, to appease the manes of departed friends, or for the amusement of a licentious populace. They become nerveless and degraded, with all their acquaintance with southern arts, the skill of native Britons was insufficient to repair the wall of Severus, erected to defend their northern frontier. When their protectors withdrew, they were unable to raise an arm in their own defence. They become the unresisting prey of every roving nation, that assailed them. Then let Roman poets and orators boast of the boundless benefits conferred by their country on despised barbarians, they are entitled to as much belief, as that a Roman horse was fit for a pontifex maximus, or that Nero deserved an apotheosis.

I am not so presumptuous, as to speak disrespectfully of the genius and learning of the Romans. It may be allowed me to enquire, how far the great multitude of human beings enjoyed their benefits, who submitted to Roman power? It is certain, that when their literature and taste were the most refined, when the arts were the most liberally patronized, corruption, licentiousness and depravity had spread deep and wide among themselves. It was at a period also, when their conquests were the most rapidly extending.—Luxury vice and extravagance had rolled their pestilential tide to the limits of the empire. Neither the

tongue of Cicero, nor the pen of Seneca, could arrest their overwhelming career.

Few are the names of men born beyond the limits of Italy, whose works adorn the annals of literature.— Did some superior genius arise in a distant province, Rome, alone, was the theatre, upon which, he could display his talents and gain the rewards of his exertions. That medium of light and knowledge, the Art of Printing, to Romans, was also, unknown. While therefore, the rays of science and learning adorned the summit of Roman society, dark, wide spread intellectual gloom surrounded its base.

It is also manifest, that some fatal, moral evil pervaded the Roman character, as well, as that of ancient nations in general. There was wanting a pure and animating system of religion and morality, which strikes deep into the bosom, which binds and fastens the principles of virtue firm on the heart. The strange and degrading mythology of the ancients could not fail to impair and finally destroy the effect of their sublimest moral doctrines. Weak must have been the influence of virtue, feeble the mandates of religion, where no vice was known, no crime recognized, but what had been perpetrated by a God.—

“Barbarus, heu, Cineres insistet victor, et urbem  
Eques sonante verberabet ungula,  
Quaeque carent ventis et solibus ossa Quirini,  
(Nefas videre) dissipabit insolens.”—*Hor.*

No human power could arrest an awful fulfilment of the prophecy.

The sword and helmet had long been the defence of the Roman empire. As the legions retired from its broad circumference, the wave of barbarian desolation rolled closely on. The productions of science, art,

taste and refinements were, at last, scattered and dispersed by its resistless power.

No enquiry can exist more interesting to the scholar, the philosopher or divine, than what was the great and potent cause, which opened the portals of intellectual light, upon the gloomy surface of the middle ages? It strikes the mind with intenser force, than the deep unseen power of Etna, which throws aloft a blaze and illuminates the surrounding ocean.

When ancient nations had surmounted all obstacles to power and security, then moral and religious principles formed no barriers against vice and corruption.—It was impossible, that they should long be respected by the learned, or revered by the ignorant. They were unfit for a solid and lasting base, upon which a nation might repose in security. Neither Roman nor Grecian philosophy and religion could have been the cause of returning civilization, after the long existence of Vandal dominion. It was not the reviving influence of Grecian and Roman institutions. They had flourished for a time, but were found unable to sustain a sinking world.

The system of the christian religion was communicated to mankind. Its rules of moral conduct were such, as human philosophy dare not impeach. It was found perfectly compatible with the fullest development of intellectual capacity. It closed no avenue to true happiness and glory. It allowed all that was valuable, in ancient wisdom. It was found consistent with every art, with every branch of science, which could improve and adorn the human character. It seizes the reins of human conduct with resistless force,

and guides them with unerring skill, while the path, luminous and direct, is opened between the soul and its eternal sovereign. The rude and cumberous machinery of ancient superstition has ceased to move.— The pagan pantheon now stands empty and forsaken; even teaching, in monumental silence, how vain have been its delusions.

Under the influence of such a system, the human mind was prepared for a new career. Its progress in science, its march towards the summit of finite attainments, has yet been firm, steady and victorious.

All christendom is now moved by one great, intellectual impulse. The mind is stretching over wider fields, through sublimer realms of knowledge, than were ever explored by Grecian or Roman genius. Improvements in the various arts, which promote the comfort and happiness of man, follow each other in rapid succession. The rights and privileges of individuals are more extensively understood. The character and objects of political institutions have become the subjects of investigation by nations, which have long slumbered in stupid repose.

Amidst the scenes of war and revolution in Europe, for a century past, intelligence has been spreading wider and taking a deeper root. It has had to contend with the influence of gold and proffered honors, with the bayonet and gallows. It has continued to spread, until it has become an object, more terrible to despotism, than the hosts of Napoleon were to national existence. The growing wealth, increasing fleets and armies of one nation excite but little alarm in another. Silent, calm and all pervading knowledge, which

reaches the bosom of every vassal subject, is the grand enemy, which arrests the attention of royal minds, which provokes their keenest vengeance. The allied monarchs of Europe are now seen traversing their dominions, like firemen through a city enveloped in flames, to arrest its progress, so fatal to arbitrary power.— They hurry along from province to province, as if passing over some deep laid mine, which is heaving the surface of their dominions with an explosion. But a cause, which unites a dozen tyrants against the welfare of a hundred millions of people, which combines the christian cross with the Mahometan crescent, cannot be triumphant.

The recent history of Spanish America affords demonstration of the resistless power of intelligence. No portion of the world could have been selected more unpropitious for political and moral regeneration. Its population had become indolent, stupid and licentious. It was composed of Aborigines, Europeans and Africans, or the mingled blood of all. An iron hearted government held political control, while religious despotism exercised its baleful, paralyzing influence over their intellectual faculties. When the power of the mother country was suspended by revolution at home, it was relaxed in her transatlantic colonies. The auspicious moment was seized for diffusion of knowledge. Its rays pierced the shades of ignorance and bigotry with the pace of lightning. Its illumination spread from the headland of Patagonia to the Carribean Sea, to the sources of the Rio del Norte. It ascended the Cordilleras and penetrated the gloomy recesses of Potosi. The dungeons of the inquisition no longer echo



with the groans of incarcerated victims, the rack no longer inflicts its cruel tortures, the sound of an *auto de fe* is silenced.

The cause of that portion of the western world is the cause of freedom and virtue. The power, which may be permitted to crush it, will consider its object but half accomplished. There will then be no peace in the bosoms of tyrants; while the great pillar of republicanism, this union, exists.

It is not a weak and boastful vanity, which induces Americans to speak often of their own country. Our public institutions are distinguished by their vigorous freedom. The testimony of the enlightened of all countries is daily offered in favor of their wisdom and solidity. Their benefits and blessings increase, as the great national family expands.

Their most conspicuous provisions are intended to promote the cultivation of the mind. They place the means of education before every door. Upon deep seated, wide spread knowledge and virtue they rest. When these are extinguished, our government must crumble to ruin.

Still, constitutional and statutory provisions would be nugatory, unless aided by a warm and energetic spirit of the people. That spirit does exist. Its animating influence reaches every patriotic heart. Our rulers have followed its dictates with religious fidelity. Individuals, distinguished for their talents, benevolence and piety have united, in numberless associations, to urge along the glorious work. We see the heralds of knowledge pursuing every path and entering every abode to bestow its blessings. The more humble, ob-

secure and ignorant a fellow mortal may be, the more he becomes an object of their generous solicitude.— They are penetrating the wilderness to disarm the savage of his arrow and war club, to teach him the arts of civilization, the value of a soul, which has been so long the sport of barbarian passions. The islands of the farthest oceans, the inhospitable shores, the dark interior of remotest continents, are all explored by the enterprising and dauntless friends of human happiness.

These are a few of the traits, which distinguish the present age, which have no parallel in the most enlightened times of Greece and Rome.

The effects of literature are unconfined by the territorial boundaries of a nation, which gives it patronage and support. It forms a bond of union among the learned and virtuous of different countries. They engage in a liberal intercourse, in a reciprocal exchange of information, sentiments and views upon the subjects of science and art. Mutual respect and friendship unavoidably follows, which must often reach, with salutary influence, the political relations of their respective governments. They tend to soften the prejudice, allay the angry passions and check the spirit of hostility, which lead to a thoughtless waste of human life.

While the subjects, to which I have alluded, are admitted to be of such great and universal importance, a variety of considerations render them peculiarly interesting to this State.

The small extent of territory, its consequent incapacity to sustain a numerous population must, of necessity, give Vermont a diminished political influence in the great confederacy. The geographical position of

the State deprives it of those important, commercial advantages, which promote the wealth and prosperity of many others.

Our people, therefore, cannot be expected to give an extensive patronage to those works of taste and refinement, which requires the revenue of princes, the resources of a nation. Public means and private munificence must long remain too limited, for the accomplishment of objects, designed more for splendid embellishment, than solid utility. Generations must pass away before public and private edifices will be erected of Parian Marble, or decorated by the pencil of West or the chisel of Canova.

There is still an ample field for the exercise of a wise and virtuous ambition. No one, who deserves to be called a citizen of Vermont, can be indifferent to her reputation. It ought to be the policy of her people, firm and unshaken, as her mountains, to unite heart and hand, in every laudable object, which can improve her condition at home and give her respectability abroad. The equality of advantages bestowed on every part, the even distribution of property, the harmony of manners, habits and sentiments, are all favorable to the highest state of moral, religious and political improvement. It is the duty of every citizen to redouble his zeal and efforts to improve the means, which we can command.

We need not, we ought not to be surpassed by any other state, in a system of early education. Apply it to infancy, make every human soul participate. Let the abodes of indigence and poverty be illuminated.—

Let the unfortunate be aided by the means, which wealth and competency can easily spare. Apply the principles of virtue warm to the tender heart. Inculcate those political maxims upon the youthful mind, which dignify human nature, as it ascends to manhood. These means are the first elements of a good and happy community, where all understand their rights and perform their duties; where opulence and wealth are confined to their proper sphere, where honest poverty can eye the scowling visage of power with a fearless countenance.

Institutions for the cultivation of the higher branches of literature are indispensable auxiliaries to virtue, religion and political independence.

There has been a time, and that within the recollection of many now present, when some have considered Academies and Colleges, as useless and even dangerous. They were considered as nurseries of pride, intolerance and aristocracy; that they tended to introduce ranks and distinctions into society, totally incompatible with republican equality. Such opinions were the offspring of political prejudice. They are daily disappearing in the presence of a sounder policy.

It is a solid political maxim, that wealth is power. If possessed by few and secured to their exclusive enjoyment by laws of primogeniture and entailment, the great mass of the community will become poor and dependant. Republican institutions demand, not its annihilation, but an equal diffusion of the means of acquirement. It is thus spread over the whole surface of society, affording universal competency and comfort. What is accumulated by one generation will be

divided, and dispersed among those which follow. The constant revolution tends to invigorate industry, create new enterprize and give perpetual freshness to human exertion. This may be, at times, humiliating to family pride, to the haughtiness of superior ancestry, but it is a safe-guard to freedom.

The power of knowledge is still more energetic and comprehensive than that, which springs from wealth. It should, therefore, become an object of even greater concern to free governments. Where few only are allowed to enjoy its benefits, the rest of the community will be retained in impotent darkness. They are at once reduced to the drudgeries of life. They become the passive instruments of despotic authority. The Vatican, for centuries, controlled the literary institutions and the learning of Europe. Its mandates shook the firmest thrones of the most powerful monarchs.—It was able, by the aid of a learned few, to exercise a dominion, a tyranny over half the world, so bold, so gigantic, so resistless, as to allow no parallel.

Its dangers are dispelled, its endless blessings are felt, when the doors of the temple of science are thrown wide open to the world ; when it is rendered accessible to the humblest, poorest individual. Every class and condition of society will, then, share its advantages. Every class and condition will find prompt and enlightened advocates among their own offspring, devoted to their rights. The great body of our yeomanry would then see genius and talents bursting from among themselves, in array, against political invasion. The liberal professions would be guarded by enlightened champions against the assaults of ignorance, prejudice and infidelity. Should our beloved country be

doomed to feel the footsteps of foreign foes, inspiration would flow from every seat of learning and science. It will animate every heart and give new vigor to every freeman's arm. Every field of battle would become a Marathon, every defile, a Thermopylæ.

An ardent and patriotic zeal exists in almost every state of the union, for the creation and endowment of those institutions, intended for the higher branches of literature. They are objects of generous pride, of high and honorable ambition. A state, which should neglect a policy, so elevated, so invaluable, must soon feel a humble degradation. It must soon appear the object of derision and reproach to a people, who have been guided by nobler views. Such a state would be regarded a dim, an eclipsed star, a rayless blank, in the midst of a surrounding constellation.

This state offered but few attractions to wealth from abroad. The early settlements were not invigorated by a copious flow of riches, from the opulent parts of the country. The first emigrants were distinguished for industry, intrepidity and resolution. The first years were devoted to the reduction of the forests, and procuring a dear earned subsistence. As they began to reap the fruits of their toilsome labors, they were assailed by the surrounding provinces. When the war of national independence began, arm and soul were devoted to that noble cause. Although disowned by those, who should have been their friends, they most bravely and gallantly maintained their full share of the contest. While the people of the confederacy were sustained by the public purse, Vermonters were compelled to rely on their own limited resources, for they

could not, with honor, submit to a government, which denied the existence of their state. All their slender means were therefore employed. Their public lands became a fund consecrated to the independence of the nation.

When the revolution terminated, their public resources were almost exhausted. Massachusetts, Connecticut, New-York and many other states held their public domain unimpaired. Their common territory has furnished a fund of millions, which a virtuous policy has devoted to the promotion of knowledge among the people. The avails of ours were expended at Bennington and Saratoga.

Amidst all the hardships and privations endured by the founders of this state, moral, literary and religious instruction were promoted with an ardent zeal. No part of the world can present a better system of primary education, than is now maintained in this state.

By a general law, corporate privileges are allowed to associations for the establishment of social libraries. They are now found in every part of the state. They have been promoted with a liberal spirit and their effects have been most extensively beneficial.

Since 1780, above forty grammar schools and academies have been instituted by the government. Although several have ceased to be useful, many are still liberally maintained.

The liberal donation to Dartmouth College, the creation of the University at Burlington and the College at Middlebury are evidences, that the people were sincerely desirous to promote the interests of literature and science.

The scientific and military academy, established at Norwich, is rapidly rising in public estimation, under the immediate superintendence of its enterprising founder.

The profession of Medicine has, within a few years, become awakened by a most laudable zeal to increase its usefulness to society and elevate its public character. Deserved commendation belongs to a few, who prepared the way for an enlarged system of study, and to the whole profession, who have sustained them, with the most spirited and liberal encouragement.

The Medical Academy, at Castleton, has risen rapidly to eminence. Its merits have secured the respect and confidence of the friends of medical science, of the whole community. A liberal course of medical instruction is also provided by the University of Vermont.

That our means may have been limited is true, but it is a truth, that produces neither discouragement nor humiliation. The friends of literature in the state may claim a spirit, and enterprize, which afford consolation for the past which will stimulate to redoubled exertions for the future. The favorable impressions, which our literary institutions have made abroad, the cheering patronage, which they have received from our fellow citizens at home, afford a pure and measureless reward to their generous benefactors. The way, broad and luminous is now opened, to the attainment of objects, the most valuable to ourselves, to an elevated and honorable station among our sister states.

My friends, Providence has allowed us to assemble within the walls of our Alma Mater. They seemed to



be the residence of some friendly genius, some mild, serene, presiding spirit, that gave us a hearty welcome. It held up before us the unblotted record of our collegiate days. It recalled to mind the toils and labors, the zeal and emulation for literary honor. It recollected the struggles of perseverance against the freezing, paralyzing omnipotence of narrow means. Even the vanities and follies of youth were presented, not with the frown of anger and reproach, but with the look of kind and charitable hope, that an atonement had been made. It seemed to enquire, with more than mortal solicitude, for absent classmates and fellow students, whether they were engaged in the employments of virtuous life, or had floated down the current of time to eternal rest.

To that institution, which has afforded us the treasures of knowledge and science, which introduced us, with maternal anxiety, to the wide theatre of life; which placed before us the land mark, the starry beacon to point out the way we might follow in safety, through a dangerous world, the heart constantly reminds us, that we owe a warm and affectionate allegiance. It is treason against a generous sensibility to abandon its welfare, or neglect the means for its continued usefulness and prosperity. The causes, which gave Middlebury College an existence, are generally understood. The ardent and unwearied exertions of its early friends are still remembered. Unaided by public resources, their own liberality and munificence supplied the deficiency of public funds. Their zeal, energy and talents overcame every obstacle. On its solid merits, on a well earned reputation, they can now

look for support, to a patriotic and enlightened community. Public opinion has placed the seal of approbation on its character. It stands conspicuous among the Seminaries of the nation. It is favored by the pious, it is approved by the learned, it is cherished by the benevolent, it is esteemed by all as an ornament and blessing to the State.

All must feel the deepest conviction, that by promoting its interests, we promote the cause of knowledge ; we follow the invocation of the mighty spirit of the age. Let it be the radiant point, the shining center, to which our views and efforts may be directed. Let it be regarded as the heart of intelligence. As it is invigorated, as its powers and energies are increased, it will send through wider ranges, over broader regions, the currents of learning, virtue and religion, the life, the health, the strength of human society.

I shall not detain you, with a detailed enumeration of the objects, to which your attention may be diverted. A few, brief suggestions only, will be urged on this occasion.

By promoting a feeling and respect, among yourselves, for the institution, you will be able to present it more impressively to the notice and regard of the friends of science and literature through our country. Its advantages as to situation ; the exemplary character and high attainments of its officers ; the industry, frugality, and virtue of the surrounding society ; the warm and benevolent friendship and esteem, ever manifested for the meritorious, persevering and industrious student, are so many, high recommendations in its favor. It is a just acknowledgement, and it affords me the greatest

satisfaction to express it, that the citizens of Middlebury have ever been most conspicuous, for those acts of generosity, kindness and affection towards the members of the institution, which give them a perpetual claim to our grateful remembrance. Their censure or applause has ever been marked by parental care and solicitude. They have thus given an efficient aid to the authority of the institution itself. They have given to industry, talents and genius, those animating and encouraging tokens of approbation, which have brightened and smoothed the rugged path of laborious study, of midnight toil and research. New energy, activity and ardor have been thus excited, as ceaseless as pulsation, as durable as life.

As the family of our Alma Mater are dispersed over the union, are engaged in distant countries, they will be able to transmit the most authentic information, as to their geography, the manners, customs, moral and political condition of their people.

Whatever may be useful to the future historian of our state or country may be collected and preserved.

A library, already valuable, may be easily enriched by rare and interesting works, which will be constantly presented to your attention.

Information of all the new discoveries in the different departments of science, all the great improvements in the arts may be transmitted to the center of your association.

Permit me also to call your attention to another subject. Its value and the faculties, which exist to accomplish it, will excite your friendly notice. I refer to